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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/723,270	11/26/2003	Willi Hofen	032301.319	8768

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SMITH, GAMBRELL & RUSSELL, LLP
1230 PEACHTREE STREET, N.E.
SUITE 3100, PROMENADE II
ATLANTA, GA 30309-3592

EXAMINER

COVINGTON, RAYMOND K

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1625

DATE MAILED: 06/02/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/723,270

Applicant(s)

HOFEN ET AL.

Examiner

Raymond Covington

Art Unit

1625

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 November 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 11/26/03.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

RD

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The phrase, a compound containing an unsubstituted NH₂ group, is unclear and indefinite. It is not clear an NH₂ can be unsubstituted, as some third attachment would seem to be necessary.

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, because the specification, while being enabling for hydrazine and hydroxylamine, does not reasonably provide enablement for a compound containing an unsubstituted NH₂ group. The specification does not enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make the invention commensurate in scope with these claims. It not being clear, as noted in the next above rejection, what constitutes an unsubstituted NH₂ group the specification only

has enablement for the examples disclosed in paragraph 0019 on page 7 of the specification.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1- 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rueter et al WO 99/11639 or Robeson et al US 2,622,060 in view of Selfert et al EP 00,019.

Determination of the scope and content of the prior art (MPEP §2141.01)

Rueter et al teach a process for separating crude epoxidation reaction products, which contain methanol and acetaldehyde using an extraction solvent of the same type claimed. See, for example, page 2 lines 18-30, and page 4 lines 16-28. Robeson et al teach an analogous process. See, for example, column 1 lines 1-12, column 2 lines 1-49. Selfert et al teach separating epoxidation reaction products using a solvent extraction process of the type recited in the claims by treating the reaction products with hydrazine. See the abstract.

Ascertainment of the difference between the prior art and the claims (MPEP §2141.02)

Rueter et al and Robeson et al do not teach using hydrazine or hydroxylamine in the extraction process. Although Robeson et al does teach using a hydroxyl (-OH) functional group containing solvent in the solvent exemplified are alcohol and glycols. However, Selfert et al teach an analogous extractive process which treats the reaction products with hydrazine as claimed.

Finding of prima facie obviousness—rational and motivation (MPEP §2142-2413)

To modify Rueter et al and Robeson et al to include the addition hydrazine treatment step of Selfert et al to obtain the cumulative purification effect would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art as the results, a more purified product, would not have been unexpected and therefore unpatentable.

US 6,838,572 and US 5,116,465 are shown but not cited as further state of the art.

No claim is allowed.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Raymond Covington whose telephone number is (571) 272-0681. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F.

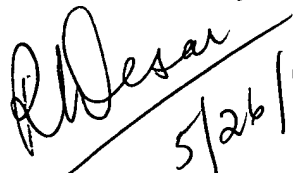
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, C. Tsang can be reached on (571) 272-0562. The fax

phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


RKC

Raymond Covington
Examiner
Art Unit 1625


5/26/05